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TITLE: Building Community Trust in Preparation for HIV Vaccine Efficacy Trials in the U.S.

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ISSUE: Testing preventive HIV vaccine candidates for use with US populations presents social challenges that make community trust critical. First, individuals targeted for recruitment into efficacy trials will be drawn from historically marginalized and disenfranchised communities. Second, antibody responses resulting from immunization may expose trial participants to social risks such as discrimination in access to insurance, medical care, and employment. Third, targeted communities exhibit a strong distrust of the federal government and public health research, especially around the issue of HIV/AIDS.

SETTING: The African American community in Durham, NC; gay men in San Francisco, CA; and injecting drug users in Philadelphia, PA.

PROJECT: *Project LinCS: Linking Communities and Scientists* was undertaken to identify effective strategies for meeting the social challenges outlined above. Using a study design collaboratively developed by researchers and community advisory boards at each site, 266 in depth open-ended interviews were conducted to identify broad concerns surrounding government sponsored biomedical research as well as HIV-vaccine specific issues.

RESULTS: Community trust in HIV vaccine research can be built if researchers:

- Understand how local communities function
- Understand the importance of diversity within communities as well as between them
- Develop respectful relationships with community members
- Seek community collaboration in decisionmaking wherever possible
- Ensure that community representatives reflect the functional diversity of the community
- Seek solutions to concerns about trust, confidentiality, and compensation for harm but acknowledge limits openly
- Negotiate strategies to ensure that communities will benefit from positive research results
- Provide prompt and full disclosure of all aspects of the research to community members

LESSONS LEARNED: CDC is working to meet the social challenges confronting HIV vaccine trials by compiling critical information on HIV vaccine research, establishing communication and education networks for information dissemination, and developing laboratory tests to quickly and reliably differentiate between vaccine-induced and infection-induced antibody responses.

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